

Local filmmaker finalist in film competition



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— Amy McClung

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Amy McClung started her own film production company when she was 15 years old.

Since then, she has produced music videos, advertisements, short films and even a full-length feature film. McClung's work has taken her to places such as North Carolina, Seattle and Panama. All that, and it will still be two years before she has a degree in film.

"I've always known that I wanted to do film, but I don't think my focus was really there," McClung said of her first few years at the University of Kansas.

Rather than focus her

attention on classes such as biology and algebra, McClung said she was preoccupied with honing her film production skills.

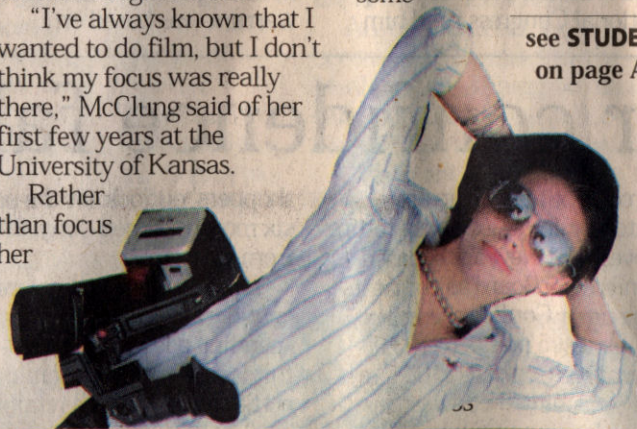
"I do a lot of freelance stuff for corporate businesses," McClung said.

However, her real passion is the music side of the film industry.

"I really want to direct music videos," she said.

McClung, a resident of Fort Leavenworth, has been fortunate enough to produce some

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Top: Filmmaker Amy McClung hangs two of her favorite cast members, Chloe. McClung was recently a semi-finalist in FOX's "On the Lot" real estate competition. Left, submitted photo: McClung taking a break from filming during a filmmaking session. Far left, submitted photo: McClung taking a break from filming during a filmmaking session. McClung is a junior in the University of Kansas film program this fall; Far left, submitted photo: McClung takes a break from filming during a filmmaking session. McClung owned her own production company when she was 15.

Student hones film production skills

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for what she described as up-and-coming bands, but said she hopes to someday work with more well-known musicians. As in most businesses, McClung said the best way to move up in the film production industry is by making as many contacts as possible.

"It's all about networking," she said.

While McClung said she has a fairly large network in the Kansas City area, she understands that to get where she wants to go, her work needs to be seen on a broader scale.

Recently, the young filmmaker was given a chance to make herself known to the world when she was selected as a semifinalist for FOX's new reality television show "On the Lot." The show, which airs at 7 p.m. on Tuesdays, is a competition between 20 independent filmmakers who are all vying for a \$1 million development deal with DreamWorks Television. The show is produced by Mark Burnett, Steven Spielberg and DreamWorks.

"I actually heard about (the competition) from an old friend of mine," McClung said.

Because of other obligations, McClung missed the original Dec. 1 deadline for submissions. However, when it was pushed back one month, she got her crew together and produced a five-minute short film to enter into the competition. Two weeks later, McClung received an e-mail informing her that her film, "Drift," was one of 200 selected from a pool of approximately 12,000 entries.

For the next step in the selection process, McClung was flown to Chicago, where she interviewed with Mark Burnett Productions and was given a second production assignment. The task was to create a three-minute short film about finding love. McClung was given just one week to write a script, find a cast, shoot the film and edit the raw footage into a final product.

"You don't have a lot of time," McClung said.

Because of the time constraints, McClung turned to some of her most frequently-used cast members — her family.

The end product was a short called "Puppy Love." The synopsis, McClung explained, is that there is a young boy who tries to gain the affections of an older woman by playing off of their

mutual love for dogs. However, the plan backfires when the dogs fall in love instead of the humans. For the starring roles, McClung cast her own Shetland Sheepdogs Mandy and Chloe. Her brother, Joe, was also part of the cast.

Unfortunately, McClung was not selected for "On the Lot," but she said the experience was still very positive because of the people she met and the exposure she is now receiving.

Additionally, McClung said the show's first few episodes have not been what she expected them to be.

"The motivation (for me) was that it had Steven Spielberg's name attached to it," McClung said.

Spielberg has yet to make an appearance on the program. Additionally, the show's ratings are very low, McClung said.

For now, McClung and her Blue Wave Productions company are working on finding a distributor for her first feature film "Change of Life."

Details about the film can be found at www.changeoflifemovie.com. More information about McClung and all of her work can be found at www.amymcclung.com.